DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 195 352 PS 011 862

TITLE Creating an Early Learning Center in an Unused Building.
INSTITUTION National Catholic Educational Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE [72]
NOTE 54p.
JOURNAL CIT NCEA Papers: Series II n4 Mar 1972

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Catholic Schools; *Child Development Centers; *Church Programs; *Creativity; Day Care; *Early Childhood Education; Kindergarten; Models; Nursery Schools; *Program Design

ABSTRACT

These three National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) papers focus on a project for providing early childhood education to Catholic youth. The first paper indicates problems of child care services currently provided by the churches, points out possibilities for implementing early childhood programs, and advocates that Catholic education move ahead in the area of early childhood education. The second paper delineates a model project that would provide full-day day care, half-day nursery school and half-day kindergarten programs in an eight-classroom elementary school building. Goals, program philosophy, project design, and program descriptions are provided. Additionally, job descriptions and qualifications, supportive services, licensing requirements, and budget considerations as well as staff meetings, parent involvement, and instruction in early learning centers are either indicated or discussed. The third paper touches briefly on (1) some basic ideas about creativity, (2) non-test means of identifying highly creative students, (3) paper-pencil or oral tests of creativity, (4) the teacher's role in developing and fostering creativity, and presents, in conclusion, practical ideas through which creativity can be fostered in the curriculum. (Author/RH)

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NCEA Papers

Series II No. 4
March, 1972
$2.00

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CREATING AN EARLY LEARNING CENTER IN AN UNUSED BUILDING

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MOVING AHEAD WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

It is redundant to say again that the early years of childhood are the most formative. However, it does bear repeating, and it bears stating that Catholic education needs to take another look at what is being done for young children in our schools, parishes, and religious education programs. After we've taken a look at what is happening, we need to take a long look at what should be happening, and what we can do to assist this area to move ahead.

In the past few years, with the decline in numbers of parochial schools, and the increase in numbers of Catholic children attending religious education classes, there also have been many requests for classes for pre-school children. Another reason for the increase in numbers of requests for pre-school classes is the resurgence of general interest in early childhood education. A third reason, though sometimes subconscious, or at least not admitted openly, is that parents prefer not to have children attend Mass with them (and cry!)--in other words, they need a baby-sitter during Mass.

In considering these reasons for pre-school classes on Sundays, we need to examine them thoroughly. In pursuing this examination we should have before us always as our primary concern--the children and their needs.

To have a pre-school class for children because "every other parish has one" is not truly being concerned with the children, but is solely a status symbol for parents and for the parish. Often this gets to the point of being a baby-sitting service because adults don't care to have squirming, crying, talking children disrupting their prayer. Looked at realistically, this is truly a service for adults; one that is not actually serving the needs of pre-school children.

Many adults who plan pre-school religious education programs have not recognized what pre-school children are capable of assimilating and what they

are not able to learn at this stage of developmental growth. Many of the adults who plan these programs have been educated in the fields of elementary and secondary education or religious education, and are not familiar with the philosophy, psychology and methods proper to early childhood education. Because of this lack in their own education, they often impose structure, learning patterns, materials, and situations on small children.

On the one hand, many adults understand the physical growth of children and do not expect unrealistic behavior from small children (i.e., a two-month-old baby is not expected to walk because his bones and muscles are not yet strong enough to support his body). But, on the other hand, adults often expect a three- or four-year-old to hold a crayon and color properly with coordination--even though the muscles in his hands are not developed, nor does he have the eye-hand coordination needed for such an activity. Similarly, we impose religious concepts on a child in religious education classes--we insist that he learn all his prayers from memory (comprehension of words seems to mean little--or else we expect the child to comprehend!) We expect him to understand concepts, doctrine, and Bible stories, and to be able to repeat them in proper sequence and with proper names.

Most weekly pre-school classes are held during Mass on Sunday and they last from 45 minutes to an hour, or a little more. In their zeal to "give religion" to these little ones, many eager teachers plan the total period to be religion oriented, forgetting completely that small children have a very small attention span. After approximately five minutes of a religion presentation at the child's level, the remainder of the period must be spent in activities planned according to child development principles, and correlated with the religious presentation. Those teachers who make everything religious run the risk of overdoing it, or of making it "soupy" and "over-sweet"--too sentimental

for the strong religious attitude we wish to build in small chilren. A teacher whose ingenuity consists of singing Jesus, coloring Jesus, dancing Jesus and playing Jesus the total period may please adults who do not know better, but she may stifle true religious development in the children she is seeking to nurture.

Teachers of pre-school children need special training. They should be teachers who are professionally trained in early childhood education and not just mothers of small children who are eager and interested. The old saying, "Anyone can teach small children," does not hold true today--nor did it ever!! The teaching of small children is a very complex and intricate process which requires training as well as personal attributes, such as understanding, patience, tenderness and kindness.

Realistically, there aren't many teachers of this background available, and therefore, it is necessary to ask available mothers to assume this responsibility. Before actual classroom duty begins, orientation classes need to be scheduled for these mothers. These classes need to include child development, child psychology, and early childhood education methods as well as orientation of young children to religious education. Needless to say, professionally trained personnel should be hired to provide this training.

Another problem that arises in setting up programs for the pre-school children at the parish level on a weekly basis is that few parishes have a classroom available that is adequately equipped for an early childhood program. Most buildings belonging to parishes are elementary schools, and first grade classrooms are not equipped to service three-, four-, and five-year-olds, and they are not easily adapted to a setting for younger children. Other rooms available are large meeting rooms, cafeterias, etc. None of these are easily adapted for young children. Multi-purpose rooms seem to serve many

groups, but are very difficult for people who are trying to provide adequate learning situations for children to use.

From a financial point of view, few pastors or boards of education see the necessity for purchasing equipment for pre-school children if it will be used for less than an hour once a week. It is true that this equipment is expensive. Because the various kinds of equipment needed by small children for learning are classified as toys, few people see the validity of purchasing these items for such short-term use. Storage during the week also poses other problems. Desks, chairs and books are understood to be necessary for any education program--however, in pre-school programs the "books" children learn from are blocks, dolls, trucks, balls, puzzles, records, story books, housekeeping toys, etc. Therefore, many of the programs presently existing are inadequate from several points of view.

They are inadequate in these areas:

1. Inadequate space.
2. Inadequate equipment.
3. Inadequately trained teachers.
4. Insufficient time to inculcate strong religious attitudes.

They are not serving needs of children because they are:

1. Status symbols for adults.
2. Baby-sitting services for adults.

Therefore, if we are truly interested in serving the needs of children, and if we feel strongly that early education in religious attitudes is necessary for our children, we need to explore what can and should be done to meet these needs.

As a vitally important area of Catholic education, early childhood education could be considered to replace the parochial school system, which

cannot continue without financial aid. Elementary schools can be transformed into family centers, with classrooms equipped for early childhood programs on a weekday basis--including day care, nursery school and kindergarten, as well as after-school programs for elementary school children, and planned areas and activities for parent education.

In an adequate program for pre-school children operated four days a week there would be sufficient time for learning experiences in religious attitudes, and there would be sufficient repetition for the carry-over necessary for true learning to take place. Also, in a program of this type, there would be time to plan meetings and classes with mothers while the children are in class. In this way, mothers would be informed about the method used with children, and this would insure a complete carry-over of religious training to the home.

If we return the emphasis of family worship to its proper place we won't be providing baby-sitting services or inadequate programs for children during the hours for Mass. A week-day program with additional time for parent education would provide much better education for children, as well as for parents, and would also provide a great service to the community at large.

Considering these important points, and the changes that are taking place in education today, Catholic education would do well to endeavor to continue to move ahead in early childhood education.

The following project, developed in cooperation with the Archdiocese of Denver, is one that could be considered, either in total or in part. Salary scales and other budget figures can be readily adjusted to comparable figures for any local area. It is designed with the idea of using existing facilities already available through an elementary school or a convent building.

CREATING AN EARLY LEARNING CENTER IN AN UNUSED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OR CONVENT BUILDING

Sister Rosemary Keegan
NCEA's Consultant on Early Childhood Education
Denver, Colorado

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What Do Early Learning Centers Teach? 38

I. GOALS

A. To provide a quality program in early childhood development for children 2 1/2 to 6 years of age.

B. To serve the parishes of the Archdiocese of Denver with a religious child care program.

C. To make adequate use of buildings formerly used for elementary schools or convents.

D. To provide a new direction for the Archdiocese of Denver in the areas of education, health, social services, and religious education.

E. To strive for better communication with and sharing of community resources, particularly within the Archdiocese, and later with the community at large.

F. To provide for positive parent involvement by establishing a board comprised of 51% parents.

G. To provide intensive religious education assistance to parents of young children.

II. PHILOSOPHY

Channeling the tremendous physical energy to develop coordination and poise. Guiding a love of noise into rhythm patterns. Aiding an active imagination to recreate living. Helping a mind to discover reality, ideas, fantasy, abstracts. Assisting the heart to love and appreciate the world around us, and the God who made it all. This is the challenge of early childhood education!

Early childhood education provides children with opportunities to learn the skills appropriate to their age, development, and ethnic background. In broad terms, early childhood education emphasizes the importance of giving a child ample opportunity to work and play independently, to learn to live effectively with himself and others, to develop a sense of identity, to experience many chances for success, and to sharpen and broaden his intellectual, spiritual, social and physical development.

In an early learning center the children will learn specific skills that will enable them to handle the academic curriculum of the elementary school. The teachers will learn to observe and to flexibly adjust the educational programs as a direct result of diagnosing and understanding each child's level, requirements, and individual style of learning. Early childhood education provides practical classroom activities which take into consideration that a child's intelligence develops in distinct stages, and that each stage requires solid attainment for the next stage to become possible.

Research by Benjamin Bloom (1964) shows that about 50% of an individual's measurable intelligence is developed in his first four years, and another 30% by the age of eight. It is questionable whether later remedial efforts can help a child to overcome the early lack of an appropriate environment.

Much emphasis has been placed on the education of disadvantaged children

from the poverty or target areas of our city. Children from homes classified as middle class and upper middle class are sometimes disadvantaged in ways other than economic. These children are in need of many of the same opportunities as the children in the target areas of the city. The programs in the target areas are often federally funded. In order to provide a program for children in other areas, parents will be expected to support the program financially.

Major areas covered in all three programs are:

Active Play

----Is a chance for children to exercise growing muscles and to use their abundant energy.

----Is an experience in leadership and fellowship.

----Provides practice in coordination, body efficiency, and creativity in motion.

----Encourages children to explore their relationship in space.

An Environment for Learning

----Is an orderly functional background to a creative program of work and play.

----Is an action classroom where space is vital and room arrangements change.

----Is a child-sized world to explore alone or in groups.

Block Building

----Is a basic tool for learning.

----Develops physical coordination skills and spatial relationships.

----Creates constructions that recreate home and community life.

----Is a cooperative activity to develop social skills.

----Provides experiences to stimulate imagination and creativity.

----Initiates discoveries in mathematical relationships and size and shape.

Dramatic Play

----Encourages a child's understanding of self and relationships with others.

----Creates an atmosphere for democratic social living.

----Is an avenue for exploring a child's problems and concerns.

----Stimulates verbal expression and imagination.

Creative Art

----Is a nonverbal means of expressing ideas, feelings, and interests.

----Develops sensitivity and reliance on personal taste and judgment.

----Is an opportunity to gain coordination skills and kinesthetic satisfaction.

----Explores materials--what they are like and what can be done with them.

Sounds and Rhythm

----Encourage freedom of movement.

----Develop a sense of rhythm and tone.

----Provide pleasure in a cooperative group activity.

Puzzles

----Provide basic practice in shape and size discrimination.

----Are simple experiences in hand-eye coordination.

----Develop self-worth through achievement.

----Are familiar subjects that stimulate language facility.

Manipulatives and Constructs

----Aid perception, judgment, and hand-eye coordination.

----Promote creativity and invention through experiementation and free play.

----Create growing confidence through problem solving.

----Allow for progress through self-directed materials.

Learning to Read

----Is a fundamental experience that provides a child with reading readiness.

----Promotes an understanding of letters, sounds, and words.

----Provides individual activities for varying levels of learning.

Mathematics and Measuring

----Teaches the language of numbers through sight and touch.

----Teaches concepts through direct participation.

----Promotes understanding through comparing, counting and grouping.

----Provides learning through experiment and discovery.

The Sciences

----Explore, experiment, observe and discover the physical and life forces of the world in which we live.

Religious Education

----Strengthens and supplements the parents' responsibility in teaching children about God.

----Lets the children learn to know and love God at their own level of understanding.

III. DESIGN OF THE PROJECT

An eight-classroom elementary school building could be effectively converted into a center for early learning. The possible programs could include:

1. Day Care (full day)
2. Nursery School (half day)
3. Kindergarten (half day)

Two classrooms for each program could be used, leaving two classrooms for use by parents and supportive services (nurse, psychologist, and social services). Office space could be used by the director and staff.

150 children could be served in this manner. Staffing would include:

Day Care (full day)	
1 classroom	1 classroom
15 children	15 children
2 teachers	2 teachers
2 aides	2 aides
2 volunteers	2 volunteers

Nursery School (half day)			
1 classroom		1 classroom	
1 classroom		1 classroom	
15 children	a.m.	15 children	a.m.
1 teacher	a.m.	1 teacher	a.m.
1 aide	a.m.	1 aide	a.m.
1 volunteer	a.m.	1 volunteer	a.m.
15 children	p.m.	15 children	p.m.
1 teacher	p.m.	1 teacher	p.m.
1 aide	p.m.	1 aide	p.m.
1 volunteer	p.m.	1 volunteer	p.m.

Kindergarten (half day)			
1 classroom		1 classroom	
15 children	a.m.	15 children	a.m.
1 teacher	a.m.	1 teacher	a.m.
1 aide	a.m.	1 aide	a.m.
1 volunteer	a.m.	1 volunteer	a.m.
15 children	p.m.	15 children	p.m.
1 teacher	p.m.	1 teacher	p.m.
1 aide	p.m.	1 aide	p.m.
1 volunteer	p.m.	1 volunteer	p.m.

Administrative Staff	and	Supportive Services
1 Director		1 Secretary-Bookkeeper
1 Social Worker		
1 Case Aide		
3 Parent Workers		
1 Nurse		
1 Cook		
1 Assistant Cook		

In order to make this early learning center successful, no contributive services will be given by paid personnel. Salaries will be comparable to other programs of this type.

One kitchen and cafeteria will serve all three programs with hot lunches and snacks.

IV. PROGRAM

DAY CARE

This program will provide child care for the children of working mothers. It is an educational program as well as a provider of custodial services from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Breakfast, snacks and lunch will be served to day care children. There is a two hour nap time provided in this schedule for the children. The educational program will follow principles of early childhood education, and provide field trips and religious education for those desiring it.

NURSERY SCHOOL

This program will provide a half day pre-school experience for children of nonworking mothers. It is an educational program. Snacks and lunch will be served to nursery school children. The educational program will follow principles of early childhood education, and provide field trips and religious education for those desiring it.

KINDERGARTEN

This program will be similar to kindergarten programs in the public schools, with the addition of religious education. It will follow the principles of early childhood education for five-year-old children, including readiness for reading and extensive field trips. The kindergarten will be a half day session, with lunches and snacks served to the children.

PARENT PROGRAM

There will be a parent group for each program. Evening and daytime meetings will be planned for these parents, encompassing child care, child development, early childhood education, religious education, first aid, community resources, and other topics. Parents will be invited to serve as volunteers in the classrooms, and to serve in salaried positions as teacher aides. Parents will be invaluable in these positions as well as in assisting

on field trips. One parent-worker will be assigned to each program.

SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM

The social worker and case aide will provide needed referral services to families in the areas of community resources, food stamps, clothing, speech and language, medical and psychological services. These two workers will service all three programs.

V. JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

DIRECTOR

The Director is the administrator of the total program, and therefore should have knowledge of and experience in the three types of programs offered, as well as in the administration of programs of this nature. A master's degree in early childhood education should be a requirement for this position.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

DIRECTOR - JOB DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF WORK

Function:

Performs administrative planning, coordinating and directing of the program.

Supervision Received:

Works under the direction of the Catholic School Board and Catholic School Office.

Supervision Exercised:

Exercises supervision over employees in the program and gives direction to the early learning program.

Duties:

1. Sets up the necessary procedures and checks on all aspects of the program to ensure that the guidelines as set forth in the program are met.
2. Administers and supervises the program and personnel according to terms of the Catholic School Board.
3. Works to coordinate services in the centers.
4. Reviews personnel applications, sets up interviews, assists in interview processes, checks references, sees that necesssary employment forms are filled out, and supervises the keeping of records on both applications and employees.
5. Makes work assignments, establishes and maintains a filing system, reviews requests for supplies, sees that the necessary supplies are ordered, and sees that supplies get to the classrooms.
6. Makes sure that facililities meet the standards of the Colorado Code for Pre-schools and that they are properly equipped.
7. Oversees all arrangements for various centers, such as: tours; scheduling

of medical, dental, psychological and nutritional services; parent programming and parent education; and social services.

8. Prepares reports for the Catholic School Board and Catholic School Office.
9. Supervises the expenditure of funds for the approved budget.
10. Plans regular staff meetings for all staff members.
11. Insures the attendance of staff members at in-service training programs and keeps attendance records. Conducts center training and supervision necessary to ensure a quality program.
12. Cooperates with existing community agencies in providing services to the early learning program, and coordinates activities with local programs.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge, understanding and conviction about the philosophy of early childhood education. Ability to exercise executive and sound judgment and to act resourcefully under varying conditions. Ability to establish and to maintain effective relationships with the public, other agencies and employees. Ability to communicate effectively with professional and nonprofessional people in the community. Ability to select and supervise staff and to delegate responsibility.

Education:

Attainment of a master's degree, preferably in the fields of education, sociology, or public administration, or related fields; or its equivalent in experience.

Experience:

Two years experience in an administrative capacity involving the planning, organization, and delegation of work with a minimum of two years experience in the group care of children of pre-school or kindergarten age. Directors

shall have completed the minimum of 24 semester hours or an equivalent number of quarter hours of credit in courses dealing with child development, the nursery school child, child psychology, and related subjects, or have passed an examination on the content of these courses.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

HEAD TEACHER - JOB DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF WORK

Function: Plans, organizes, and implements a preschool program based on the individual educational, social and emotional needs of children enrolled in the Early Learning Center.

Supervision Received: Performs work under the direct supervision of the Director.

Supervision Exercised: Has commensurate authority over paid and volunteer staff to effectively perform the duties set forth below.

Duties: Establishes educational and social goals that are realistic and that are compatible with the guidelines as set forth. Plans and executes daily activities for one class of 15 children. Coordinates his activities with those of parents and other disciplines involved in the program. Organizes classroom materials and equipment with provisions for care and replenishment of the same. Is responsible for the securing of proper authorization from parents for extra classroom activities. Participates in the in-service training program; attends all in-service training meetings and workshops relating to teachers; and provides guidance and training through classroom experience and resource materials for those paid and volunteer personnel assigned to his classroom. Attends all meetings as determined by the Director. Maintains a current progress report on each child in his classroom; and records observed problem areas and achievements in all aspects of the program for evaluative purposes. Duties related to the above as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities: Knowledge of the commitment to educa-

tional and social objectives as defined by the early learning program. Competence in the mechanics of teaching. Demonstrated ability to relate to the multi-disciplined team approach to education. Ability to communicate effectively with both professional and nonprofessional people. Considerable knowledge of current social and economic problems. Ability to exercise initiative and sound judgment and to react resourcefully under varying conditions. Working knowledge of program development.

Education: Bachelor's degree in elementary education with specialization in early childhood development, or college level training and extensive experience in the field.

Experience: Preferably, teaching experience in pre-school, kindergarten or primary school.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

TEACHER AIDE, CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - JOB DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION OF WORK

Function: Assists the head teacher in the implementation of an educational program for a class of 15 pre-school children.

Supervision Received: Works under the close direction of the head teacher and under the general supervision of the Director.

Duties: Assists the head teacher in a variety of tasks, such as mixing paint, caring for toys and equipment, supervising on the playground, and supervising at mealtime.

Directs classroom activities in the absence of the head teacher.

Participates in the in-service training program by attending all meetings for assistant teachers; and by practicing the craft of teaching under the guidance of the head teacher.

Reports observed existing or potential problems to the head teacher.

Duties related to the above as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge , Skills and Abilities: Knowledge and understanding, through experience, of the problems involved in teaching young children.

Ability to communicate warmth to children in her care. Ability to react resourcefully under varying conditions. Demonstrates willingness to accept responsibility and training.

Prerequisites: Ideally, a parent of a child(ren) enrolled in early learning program. Speaks clearly and has enough command of the English language that children will be exposed to a good language model. A second language is considered an asset.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

SOCIAL WORKER - JOB DESCRIPTION

FUNCTION

Performs in accordance with accepted practice those social service work activities which assist children enrolled in early learning programs. Services are directed toward identification and problem solving activities with both children and their families so that each child can make maximum use of this experience.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Works under the direct supervision of the Director.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Supervises the social services program within the center and exercises direct supervision over the parent program aides.

DEFINITION: SOCIAL WORKER I

Works under close supervision and performs a variety of social service tasks directed toward some independent and innovative action.

DUTIES

Secures information regarding the child and his family through periodic home visits, existing records, and conferences with other staff members. Evaluates social data and through social work services helps the family attain and realize the best possible social adjustment. Coordinates his activities with those of other local agencies serving families of the children, and arranges referrals to same, when feasible. Interprets the social services program to parents and center staff members. Acts as a member of the inter-disciplinary team which serves families and the program of the center. Maintains a record of all social services activity to insure a meaningful permanent record for each child, and for the purpose

of evaluation. Works with and assists the parent program aides in parent involvement programs. Attends in-service training workshops and meetings, supervisory conferences, and regular individual conference group meetings. Performs other duties related to above as assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of current social, economic and cultural problems. Ability to make clear and pertinent comments and statements. Ability to maintain harmonious working relationships with others. Ability to communicate in writing and maintain adequate records. Ability to exercise good judgment in evaluating situations and making decisions.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Philosophical commitment to the objectives of the early learning program. B.S. or B.A. degree from an accredited college. Preferably one year of social work experience and/or experience closely related to same.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

CASE AIDE - JOB DESCRIPTION

FUNCTION

Performs in accordance with accepted practice those social work activities which assist those children enrolled in the early learning program. Services are directed toward identification and problem solving activities with both children and their families, so that each child can make maximum use of this experience.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Works under the direct supervision of the Director and under the professional supervision of the social work supervisor.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Supervises the parent programmers and the parent program.

DEFINITION

Case Aide: Works under close supervision of the social work supervisor, and performs a variety of social service tasks that does not exceed the limitations of his or her knowledge, training, and skills.

DUTIES

Secures the information regarding the child and his family that determines the basis for immediate and future service; coordinates his activities with those of other local agencies serving families of early learning program children; provides leadership and supervision to parent programmers in parent involvement programs; attends in-service workshops, and meetings, supervisory conferences, and regular individual conference group meetings. Performs other duties related to above as assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

An awareness of current social, economic and cultural problems, some

knowledge of basic social case-work principles, ability to plan the work for three parent aides.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Philosophical commitment to the objectives of the early learning program. Must have a high school diploma, or GED certificate, must have worked as parent programmer for at least two years, with satisfactory performance; have some college courses pertaining to social work and a commitment to continue in college until a degree is obtained.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

PARENT PROGRAMMER - JOB DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION:

Function:

Assists the social worker in the implementation of a parent involvement program for the families of all the children enrolled in the early learning program.

Supervision Received:

Exercises supervision over parent groups and their activities.

Duties:

Is responsible for parents' meetings. With the cooperation of parents and their representatives, actively assists the parents in programming.

Helps parents to develop leadership abilities. Provides resource information pertaining to community action or community involvement.

Follows up on absenteeism from early learning classes, and reports findings to the social worker and head teacher.

Makes an effort to be generally aware of existing and/or potential problems or needs of parents, and reports same to appropriate staff members (e.g., social worker and/or teacher, etc.)

Attends all in-service training meetings for parent programmers.

Duties related to the above as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Education:

Academic level sufficient to enable person to make meaningful written reports.

VI. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

HEALTH SERVICES

A full-time nurse will be employed at the Early Learning Center. However, a possibility for assistance could be the Visiting Nurses Association which presently serves the Catholic school system. Assistance from this group would be limited to referral help, vision and hearing screenings, some immunization and some lab work. Physical examinations for children would be a requirement--to be scheduled by parents prior to enrollment in the program. Perhaps some agreement could be reached with a Catholic hospital for providing a consultation service with physicians, psychologists and speech therapists. These services should extend to assisting parents' education in the medical and health field.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

If psychological services can't be arranged through a hospital, there are possibilities of contacting student psychologists through Colorado General Hospital, Denver University and the University of Colorado, as well as Denver General Hospital.

SOCIAL SERVICES

A full time social worker and case aide will handle the case load of the entire program. A possibility for guidance and supervision of these two staff people could be the use of social workers from Catholic Charities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING SERVICES

The educational component will need extensive training and technical assistance, as well as supervision, and could be supplied by the consultants presently employed for this purpose at the Catholic Education Office. This project should be an extension of the CEO. Budgetary and purchasing assistance could also come from archdiocesan offices.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteers for the program could be recruited from such Catholic organizations as:

Catholic Education Guild	Knights of Columbus
Catholic Daughters of America	Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts
Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women	Serra Club
Parish Altar and Rosary Societies	Theresians

It would be necessary to have one dedicated volunteer to serve as the coordinator of volunteers, to maintain a current and working list of volunteers, and to continue the recruiting of volunteers throughout the program. This person could also serve as the public relations person, perhaps on a salaried basis the second year.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation could prove to be a difficulty for getting children to and from the Early Learning Center. Field trips are a necessity in early childhood education. Contracting services for busses is not too expensive and relieves the administrators of concern over proper servicing and maintenance of busses, as well as insurance costs. However, purchase of and owning a bus has the advantage of having its control and use at the administration's discretion. Purchase of a bus would be approximately $3,000 plus $5,000 for service, gas and maintenance, plus $5,000 or $6,000 for the employment of a bus driver. If a bus were owned, children could be picked up at home and brought to the Center, and returned later.

VII. LICENSING BY STATE AND CITY

These regulations are available from the state's department of social services, and are on order. Before the Early Learning Center could be opened, it would be necessary to pass all of these requirements, as well as those of the city building code department. Because the area has most probably been used formerly as a school, zoning may not be a problem.

VIII. BUDGET

PERSONNEL

TITLE	Annualized SALARY	NO. OF MONTHS	NO. OF HOURS PER DAY
Director	$10,000	12	8
Secretary	6,300	12	8
Social Worker	9,000	12	8
Case Aide	4,500	12	8
Nurse	9,000	12	8
Parent Aide	4,000	12	6
Parent Aide	4,000	12	6
Parent Aide	4,000	12	6
Cook	4,500	12	6
Asst. Cook	4,000	12	6
Day Care Teacher	7,500	12	6
Day Care Teacher	7,500	12	6
Day Care Teacher	7,500	12	6
Day Care Teacher	7,500	12	6
Nursery Teacher	7,500	12	6
Nursery Teacher	7,500	12	6
Nursery Teacher	7,500	12	6
Nursery Teacher	7,500	12	6
Kg. Teacher	7,500	12	6
Kg. Teacher	7,500	12	6
Kg. Teacher	7,500	12	6
Kg. Teacher	7,500	12	6
12 Teacher Aides	4,500 = 54,000	12	5
	$203,300		

NON-PERSONNEL

Equipment - $3,000/program = $9,000

Travel

1. Mileage for Social Worker & Case Aide
   300 mi./mo. x 10¢/mi. x 12 mo. = $720 ($360 apiece)
2. Field Trips
   $25/mo./class x 12 x 12 mo. = $3600

Classroom Consumables - $5/child x 150 x 12 mo. = $9,000

Janitorial Service - $800/mo. x 12 mo. = $9,600

Office Supplies - $250/mo. x 12 mo. = $3,000

Utilities - $450/mo. x 12 = $5,400

OTHER COSTS

Lunches, snacks and breakfasts	
$1.00/day/child x 150 x 200 days =	$30,000
Telephone	
$75/mo. x 12 mos. =	900
Bonding	
$150.00	150
Insurance (accident)	
$2.00/child x 150 =	300
Insurance (liability)	
$1.00/child x 150 =	150
Conferences	
$100/year	100
Total	$71,920

TOTAL COST

Total Cost - $176,220

150 children @ $1,175.00 per year
8 hour day 98.00 per month
5.00 per day
260 days per year 0.63 per hour

30 children 8/hr./day - 12 mos.		$58,740.00
260 days per year	Per child per year	1,958.00
	Per child per month	163.00
	Per child per day	7.53
	Per child per hour	0.94
120 children 4/hr./day x 12 mos.		$117,480.00
260 days per year	Per child per year	979.00
	Per child per month	82.00
	Per child per day	3.77
	Per child per hour	.94

This 260 days is based on 5 days a week for 52 weeks. Total program days include vacations and holidays and staff days for employed personnel--not pupil days.

APPENDIX

STAFF MEETINGS

In all levels of education there is need for teachers, nurses, psychologists, social workers and administrators to talk with each other concerning the children. It is even more vital in early childhood education that these team members communicate well in order to assure children of a top quality beginning in the world of education.

It is idle talk to verbally support this theory if nothing is planned by administrators to provide adequate staff meeting time during regular working hours for this important communication to take place. There are various solutions--one is staggered hours for the staff, allowing some staff to meet, but never allowing time for the total staff to meet together.

The most meaningful, as well as innovative solution, is to plan four days for children and one full day for the staff. This staff day would be composed of three major parts: staff meeting, planning meeting, and record keeping.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Meaningful parent involvement is a major necessity in order for a program to maintain a high level of learning for both parents and children.

Parents must understand the answers to the questions concerning why certain approaches are adopted in teaching young children. It is often their understanding of these important things that makes the difference between parents who prove to be helpful to their children throughout their school years, and those who are a constant hindrance to their children.

Good parent understanding is also of vital importance in the parent-staff relationships. These relationships are solidified through individual conferences, group meetings, and parent-initiated meetings.

A board of directors could be formed with 51% parents, and others from the community at large--as well as representatives from the Catholic Education Office.

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WHAT DO EARLY LEARNING CENTERS TEACH?

In spite of the excellent educational record of good nursery schools, there are still people who think that "the children only play and don't really LEARN anything." We list here a few of the informational items and attitudes taught in nursery school and kindergarten.

A. QUANTITATIVE CONCEPTS:

1. The teacher carefully guides the children into systematic number thinking. Through counting blocks or each other, through taking turns, etc., they gain understanding of cardinal and ordinal meanings as well as the serial order of numbers.
2. Children learn to understand more, less, bigger, smaller, taller, shorter, heavier, lighter, etc., through practical situations. They measure one thing against another, e.g. "Two of these blocks make one of those."
3. They learn before, after, soon, now, morning, afternoon. They learn today, tomorrow, yesterday. The names of the months become familiar and they come to think of the year as a succession of four seasons and a recurrence of familiar holidays.

B. LANGUAGE TRAINING:

1. Children are encouraged to talk with the teacher and with each other, thus learning new words and skills in communication. Vocabulary is also built through carefully planned new experiences associated with the appropriate words, group discussions, language games, and the telling and reading of many stories and poems.
2. An interest in and desire for reading is cultivated; attractive and suitable books are made available for the children's enjoyment. They are taught the proper care of books.

3. Foreign-speaking children acquire a basic knowledge of English in pleasant, informal situations. They lose their fear of it.

C. SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AND HABITS:

1. Children learn much about the physical properties of things around them and of their own bodies, and "how things work." They learn what makes a structure stable, how to steer wheeled vehicles, how a lever (see-saw) operates, how to use a pulley, magnet, or magnifying glass.
2. They learn about the needs, habits and life cycles of various plants and pets and about wind, weather, heat and other natural forces.
3. Above all, they learn reasonableness, accurate observation, the exercise of judgment, how to seek answers, and how to carry through simple experiments.

D. OTHER LEARNINGS:

1. Music: Children l arn to enjoy listening to music, singing songs, playing simple instruments, creating music through rhythmic responses.
2. Art: They learn to handle various art materials creatively and expressively.
3. Sensory Training: Through guided observation they learn to notice differences and similarities in color, shape, pitch, etc. Visual acuity and eye-hand coordinations are taught through puzzles and games, through study of pictures, etc. Auditory training comes through music, gauge, and other activities.
4. Memory is cultivated through discussions of past events and through learning games, poems, songs, etc.
5. Social Attitudes: They learn favorable attitudes toward one another, toward teachers, and toward learning; ability to function in a group,

to listen to others, to await one's turn, to cooperate, to assume responsibility, to concentrate on a task, and to follow direction.

6. Religious Education: It will strengthen and supplement the parents' responsibility in teaching their children about God and will provide them with organized material for follow-up at home. This portion of the program will help children to appreciate and understand, at their own level, and thus come to know and love God during their extremely impressionable and formative years of life.

ALL THESE LEARNINGS SPELL OUT READINESS FOR THE MORE FORMAL INSTRUCTION OF THE ELEMENTARY YEARS.

STIMULATING

CREATIVITY IN YOUNG CHILDREN

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STIMULATING CREATIVITY IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Prior to 1950 creativity was a concept little known and little understood. Because of the investigations of such scholars as Paul Torrance, J.W. Getzels, Philip Jackson and J.P. Guilford--to name only a few--the topic has become so popular that there are now about 5000 bibliographic entries for it. Thanks to such research we fortunately have a body of tested knowledge on the subject. In this paper I will touch briefly on: 1) some basic ideas about creativity; 2) some non-test means of identifying highly creative students; 3) various paper-pencil or oral tests of creativity; 4) the teacher's role in the development and fostering of this unique power and 5) finally, I will attempt to present some practical ideas through which creativity can actually be fostered in the curriculum.

Creativity, simply but correctly defined, is putting together two or more old ideas to produce a new one. The layman usually thinks of creativity only in relation to the arts and, while special talents do result in productions in some limited fields, the creativity of which I speak is a wider concept. It is a way of permitting a person to live life, an ordinary life, in a fuller, richer manner. It is a means of expansion in a different and rewarding way. It is the four-year-old who asks you to hold his other hand because this one is getting dizzy; it is the six-year-old who can outwit you in thinking up "naughty" things with which to tantalize you; it is the eight-year-old whose vivid imagination makes him think up three endings for a story that you never dreamed of; it is the youngster who can tolerate a high degree of surface imbalance; it is the man who plays with ideas and ends up concocting a polio vaccine. The genesis of creative talent is broad. It is all of this and much more.

Is creativity a gift limited to the select few? If I speak in the narrow

sense of talent in the arts, perhaps the answer is yes, but in the manner of which I truly speak, the answer is no. Research has verified the fact that contrary to popular belief, all human beings are endowed with creativity. Like intelligence, this precious heritage is not fixed but it must be awakened, provoked, encouraged and cultivated. For proper growth it is dependent upon both nature and environment. Even if nature placed limitations on it, it still has a range within which it can function. This fact--that creativity is not something confined to only a gifted few--is only now becoming recognized. It is interesting to note that in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, self-actualization is the epitome of the scale. Maslow suggests that this concept of his and the concept of creativeness are becoming more and more one to him and that perhaps they may end up being one and the same thing.

Not only do researchers claim that all of us have creative potential, but they allege that this potential can be developed by practice. The abilities that surface must be encouraged and the sleeping ones must be awakened. Where could this activity be better undertaken than in our schools? Is it not indeed a specific function of education? Sad to say, this has not been the case in the past. For the greater part, we have shied from an intangible that we were afraid would suddenly develop life and start to dominate us. As we begin to understand the significance of creativity, and realize its potential for mentally healthy, thoroughly developed human beings, we, as teachers, will realize our responsibilities to delve more into the literature, seeking for ways to foster creativity and to use our own powers to find means within the curriculum to actually seek it out.

Even though I maintain all children have creative ability, there are some children whom we can identify as being outstandingly creative. Their powers are not dormant but have emerged already. Usually these children are difficult to

handle in the classroom. Sometimes they try our patience to the nth degree; often they frustrate us. If you have coped with such talent, you will recognize some of the signs listed, some non-test indicators of these children. No child possesses all of the following, but the highly creative child will be characterized by several.

1. He is curious about everything he sees: himself, others, his surroundings, the outer world. He needs to touch, hold, study things. He uses his senses freely.

2. He is extremely interested in new, strange or unusual elements and studies, probes and explores them.

3. He seeks out the unusual and is drawn instinctively to the novel.

4. He asks many questions--questions that are penetrating and often exasperating because the adults do not know the answers.

5. He seldom gives convergent answers but instead is given to divergency. He does not see one single answer but many answers.

6. He overlooks detail; he sees the gestalt.

7. He is not interested in facts, but in meanings and implications. He cannot give you the precise information like a date but he can cite cause and effect.

8. He is not perturbed by chaos and disorder--he cannot be bothered with such matters. He is too preoccupied with a larger focus.

9. He is a non-conformist, though not a compulsive one, and is creative even in his naughtiness.

10. He has an active, quick imagination which never seems to run down.

11. He is flexible and can readily adapt to new possibilities and new solutions.

12. He seems, at times, to lack "common ground" with his peers and has difficulty relating to them.

13. He is usually unabashed, tends to be self-assertive, dominant and possessed of great energy.

14. He is not afraid of making a mistake or taking a risk and, more so than the normal child, he is fairly immune from a fear phobia.

You can readily see then, that the children possessing the greatest creativity

are not the model pupils of any classroom. Actually, they couldn't care less about being so either. Teachers constantly describe such children as "hard to handle," "difficult," "trouble-makers," etc. If teachers could read these non-test indices correctly, they would understand these children and could, perhaps, channel the creativeness in positive directions.

Besides the non-test indices just listed, there are now a number of paper/pencil or thought tests designed for the purpose of distinguishing and directing creativity. As you well realize, none of our standard intelligence tests measure this specific trait and this is one of their great weaknesses.

It was this deficiency that caused the development of a new type of test. You might enjoy trying some of these yourself.

1. Tin can test--in five minutes, have the child list as many uses as possible of a tin can.

2. Circle test--in ten minutes, ask the child to draw as many different objects as possible using a circle as a base.

3. Ask and Guess test--present a picture to a child and in five minutes have him ask as many questions as possible about the picture.

4. Product Improvement test--present a toy and ask the child to tell all the ways the toy could be changed to make it a better toy.

5. Just Suppose Test--present the child with an improbable situation. Ask him to tell you all the things that might occur as a result of the predicament.

6. Imaginative Stories test--ask the child to make up stories about animals or people having divergent characteristics, e.g., a flying dog.

7. Incomplete Figures test--give the child ten incomplete figures and ask him to add lines to complete an interesting object or picture.

Children scoring high on these tests, research says, initiate a larger number of ideas and are more original than their peers.

Teachers are in a position either to kill the creativity dormant in children or to stimulate and promote it. Researchers tell us that children begin life

using their innate creative powers freely, without inhibition or fear of conformity. With the beginning of school, however, they find themselves forced to fit into the mold provided, to "be like everyone else." This is such a devastating experience that by fourth grade children are afraid to deviate from the acceptable path. Little by little, the spark of creativity dims until finally it is snuffed out entirely and the child becomes one of the "good" children--nameless, conformed and creatively dead.

It is our job to try to discover talent and to provide the climate and conditions in which it can grow. Of course, this implies that teachers value creative thinking and that they appreciate their role in providing an environment in which children can function freely. It calls for them to teach creatively. James A. Smith[1], the author of a series of books on creative teaching, points out dramatically that the methodology of creative teaching is not the same as our traditional methodology. Teachers can and should be creative themselves and allow for and promote creativity on the part of each student in the classroom. I recommend this series for your careful study.

Courses are actually being taught today in such areas as "Creative Imagination," "Check-list Procedures," and the "Art of Questioning." These courses are often provided for teachers in in-service training--and this is as it should be. Unless teachers realize the implications of the entire creative range, they will never succeed in permitting children to blossom freely and to experience releases of inner urges that make a person feel fulfilled.

Besides courses for teachers, R.E. Myers and Paul Torrance have written a series of workbooks devised to elicit a variety of creative responses from children.[2] The titles of the workbooks indicate the emphasis of each one:

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[1]James A. Smith, Setting Conditions for Creative Teaching in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc. 1965.)

[2]R.E. Myers and E. Paul Torrance, (Boston: Ginn and Co. 1964, 1965, 1966.)

Can You Imagine?
Plots, Puzzles and Ploys
For Those Who Wonder
Invitations to Thinking and Doing
Invitations to Speaking and Writing Creatively

Accompanying each workbook is a teacher's manual. A perusal of the series would give an eager teacher a multidue of ideas which she could adapt for use in the classroom. There might be other series designed to elicit creativity of which I am unaware.

What kind of a classroom climate is necessary for fostering creative growth? According to James A. Smith,[3] there are certain conditions conducive to this growth; they include intellectual, physical, socio-emotional, psychological and educational aspects of a child's living. Intellectual curiosity is spurred by an abundance of stimulating material around; by directly planned teaching situations that keep all children thinking all of the time; by stimulating deductive thinking and by helping children to see relationships, to pass judgments and to make decisions.

The physical arrangements of the room must make it like a workshop where learning centers exist and desks and tables can be freely moved to suit an occasion. Good organization calls for an attractive, colorful, well-balanced room kept in order by a teacher who is a good housekeeper. The climate of the class should be a happy one--creative and democratic--and where possible, both teacher and children should plan the program together.

The social-emotional climate is one in which there is reward for various kinds of achievement and talents. No idea is too "silly" to be considered.

Not only would Torrance say that no idea was too silly to be accepted, but he identifies four principles for teachers that must be adhered to if the social-emotional climate is to be conducive to promoting creative thinking:

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[3]Smith, op. cit.

1. Be respectful of unusual questions. Take these questions seriously. This does not imply you must have an answer. If the answer is something a child can find out himself, let him do so. Children need to learn how to sustain a question, to play with it, toss it back and forth, refine it and accept the questioning mood without the need for ready-made answers from the teacher or parent. If teachers show irritation and evasiveness when children ask questions, few children have the power to stand up against such behavior and they will stop asking questions that bother them.

2. Be respectful of imaginative, unusual ideas. Creative children will see many relationships and significances that even the teacher will miss. This is sometimes difficult for the teacher to accept. It is often harder to respect unusual ideas children express on their own than it is to accept the unusual ideas we try to provoke from them.

3. Show your pupils that their ideas have value. The difficulty with showing pupils their ideas have value is that often adults don't honestly believe children are able to express worthwhile ideas. Such teachers might verbalize acceptance but children can see right through such hypocrisy. The great thinkers of the world have had to have had confidence that their ideas were valuable and preschoolers must find signs of such acceptance from their teachers.

4. Occasionally have pupils do something "for practice" without the threat of evaluation. We do not need to evaluate everything a child does. Fortunately we who work with young children find this an easy principle to apply since we do not usually evaluate work in the sense of a grade, but we should abstain from making both non-verbal and verbal judgmental remarks.[4]

Even though the teacher values and fosters creativity, she does not

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[4] Ghiselin, Brewster, The Creative Process (Berkeley: University of California Press. 1952.)

overlook the sometimes objectionable behavior of the highly creative child and she works diligently with him to make him less objectionable.

Psychological conditions are set by a permissive atmosphere that is built on certain underlying securities. Realizing that there must be both motivation and tension to provoke creativity, the teacher deliberately sets situations to agitate such thinking and production. Having an accepting attitude toward creativity is, however, the most optimal psychological condition that can prevail.

Finally, the ideal educational climate exists when the teacher herself realizes that the traditional methods of teaching must give way to new and varied approaches. Climate, as you can well see, is extremely important and, happily, such a climate is not impossible to establish.

As has been implied throughout this paper, the teacher who will have the most success in fostering creativity will be a person aware and sensitive to nature, to things around her and above all to people. From the richness and depth of her personality will come the necessary inspirations for creativity in the classroom itself.

What are some of the practical ideas we can implement in order to foster creativity in our children? This next section will include suggestions made in list form and ideas progressing ordinarily from kindergarten level to primary level.

1. Imagination Stimulators

    a. Show a picture and ask the children to tell its story concentrating on the use of imagination.

    b. Have them examine the same picture and make up a second, different story.

    c. Ask them to tell what happened after this picture.

    c. Read a selection on such as the following and ask the children to

respond verbally or in writing: In the neighborhood park, a rare tree unknown in this country has been identified. What difference could this make to the community?

e. Ask for a response to such phrases as:
Why is a clock like a car?
Why is a tree like a dog?
Why is a lamp like a leaf?

f. Draw an odd shape and ask the children to tell what it is, where it came from and what it can do.

g. Ask them to add to the shape and once again answer the same questions posed above.

h. Have the children pretend to be someone or something else, e.g. You are all made of putty. What are you? What can you do? Can you talk?

i. Have them think of noises. Ask them: Which ones make you sad? Which ones make you glad? Change your favorite noise to make it a happier noise.

j. Have the children respond to a list of words telling what comes into their mind, e.g. a clock, a stone, a paper clip, a golf ball.

k. Use picture books such as The Dragon in the Clock Box by M. Jean Craig as stimulation for good guessing fun.

l. Ask them to create their own animal. Have them move as he moves; make a noise distinctive of him.

m. Have them pretend they are their favorite dessert. How do they feel?

2. Creative Movement--control of the body.
Have the children work out these exercises:

a. Take a common movement and perform it differently, e.g. skipping, stretching.

b. Mirror image the actions of a partner.

c. Hold onto a chair and bend and twist yourself around it.

d. Utilize space in as many ways as possible. Go high, go low, go far out to one side, become big, become little.

e. Move selected parts of the body--toes, hips, knees, head.

f. Move to music; either isolated body parts or the entire body by walking, running, jumping, skipping.

g. Move naturally to the reading of a poem.

h. Make up some new movements of your own. Experiment with space.

i. How many different ways can you find to let a kleenex fall?

j. On how many parts of your body can you place a piece of paper?

k. Move like something bigger than you are; something smaller than you are.

l. Make a knot out of your body.

m. Do you always walk the same way? How do you walk when you are happy. When you are sad? Angry?

n. How would you walk if--
   1. One leg were shorter than the other?
   2. One leg were stiff?
   3. All you had were toes?
   4. All you had were heels?
   5. If you had only toes on your right foot and heels on your left?
   6. One foot turned in and one turned out?
   7. If you had no knees?

3. Language Arts; communication

a. Use a "junk" box. Have the children describe in as many ways as possible each piece in it.

b. Show a picture and have the children discuss what they see trying to use a colorful vocabulary.

c. Ask them to make up stories about a picture.

d. Show an object and elicit ways to describe it, emphasizing an expanded oral response.

e. After an oral discussion on the above, have the children put their descriptions in writing.

f. Have them act out a known story, saying the parts similarly to the way the author wrote them.

g. Have them re-write a story and dramatize it.

h. Ask them to write their own story and dramatize it.

i. Ask them to re-write their story using move vivid words.

j. Provide the children with story topics that will stimulate their imagination so they will write well.

k. Suggest nonsensical titles for which the children write stories, e.g. Tom and the Guzeywad.

l. Give a beginning for a story and have the children complete it.

m. Show the children some colorfully illustrated book jackets and have them write stories using the title and pictures as a guide.

(N.B. Consistent use of the art of story-telling by the teacher is taken for granted in the area of language arts development.)

4. Music

a. Provide opportunities and instruments so that children can experiment with sound. Musical instruments should be available in the classroom for the children to use.

b. Encourage the children to make noises in rhythmical patterns.

c. Have children make up songs about daily activities.

d. Have them experiment with musical notes. Are they high or low, loud or soft?

e. Have regular periods of free musical interpretation through the use of the body.

f. Give directions suggesting that the body move rhythmically by being a ping pong ball or a top or an egg beater.

g. Ask the children to write a story to be done in dance.

(N.B. I have purposely made the art and music lists short because ideas abound in these two highly creative fields.)

5. Art

a. Keep various art materials available, to be used when "in the mood."

b. Expose children to all kinds of art media.

c. Encourage them to fingerprint on slippery surfaces.

d. Tell them to crumple a sheet of paper; flatten it out and paint on it.

e. Have everyone draw two circles on a sheet of paper. Hand the sheet to the next person and have them draw something, using this base.

f. Encourage the making of mobiles.

g. Provide a box of materials of interesting shapes so that children can experiment.

h. Have them paint to music.

i. Encourage them to paint words, e.g. joy, fear, etc.

j. Ask them to paint phrases, e.g. paint the noise of a busy street.

k. Ask them to mold sand.

l. Have them play with puppets.

m. Have them do self-portraits.

In conclusion, I hope that all of you as teachers realize the tremendous role that is yours--not as transmitters of facts--but as vital persons who make learning exciting and full of discovery. Remember, you cannot teach creativity; you can only set the conditions, stimulate, develop and nurture it. When you see the creativity budding, you must respect this spark of genius and appreciate the fact that our future depends upon such sparks. Civilization will progress only if we have individuals with new solutions and fresh ideas. Educators should accept the challenge of finding appropriate techniques by which they call forth these new solutions and new ideas. Let us hopefully compensate for the way we have overlooked a vast important area of development in the past. By cultivating an insatiable interest in creativity may we, as teachers of young children, make our contribution to a better future.

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